

50 questions on 2013 Business & Management Paper 1 Case Study

Royal Danish Bearings

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ABSTRACT

I have prepared 50 questions on the Royal Danish Bearings case study. Feel free to use them with your students. I have not assigned any marks for each question, it is just a random summary of questions that I could relate as I read the case study. The questions flow in the order of the case study. I have not written down answers to any of the questions at this stage. I will be getting my students to do most, as part of their learning process of the case study.

1. In light of the expansion of the ball bearing industry, describe the changes that are taking place in RDB's product portfolio.

OR

Using an appropriate tool (such as the Boston Consulting Group matrix), indicate RDB's product portfolio in the 21st century.

2. Explain how concentrating in Denmark, Northern Germany and Sweden can enable RDB to benefit from economies of scale.

OR

Explain two types of economies of scale that RDB may benefit from concentrating in Denmark, Northern Germany and Sweden?

3. Explain one advantage and one disadvantage of RDB using internal/organic growth as opposed to external methods of growth.
4. Draw a Position Map for RDB and its competitors, UAB and FIB. (refer Line 20).
5. "Immediately after the second world war, RDB began to face competition from new Japanese companies" (Line 22). Analyze how the entry of foreign firms impacts a company's decision-making.
6. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of RDB using Just-In-Time (JIT) production.
7. Using a PEST framework, analyze the external opportunities and threats that affected RDB.
8. Prepare a SWOT analysis showing only the opportunities and threats for RDB.
9. Evaluate the suitability of a tall organizational structure for RDB under the leadership of Valdemar.
10. Explain the benefits of using Total Quality Management at a multinational company such as RDB?

OR

Explain how introducing management techniques such as TQM, benchmarking and Kaizen can help develop 'consistent, quality products' at RDB.

OR

Analyze two reasons why RDB should move from traditional quality control methods to a Total Quality Management approach?

11. "Valdemar empowered his middle managers" (line 35). Discuss the significance of job empowerment in improving productivity at RDB.
12. Analyze why Valdemar might have found it difficult to satisfy all of RDB's stakeholders? (Line 40)
13. Discuss two possible areas of conflict between RDB's stakeholders.
14. Explain the phrase 'privately owned' used to describe RDB.
15. Explain the difference between Valdemar's and Anna's leadership style.
OR
Compare Valdemar's and Anna's leadership styles and assess to what extent these have contributed to the change in RDB's organization structure.
16. Using relevant motivational theory, evaluate Valdemar's paternalistic leadership style on employee motivation.
17. Explain the term 'corporate culture' with reference to RDB.
18. With reference to appropriate motivation theory, analyze the likely impact of RDB's corporate culture on the level of employee motivation.
19. Explain the benefits and costs of preparing contingency plans for a multinational company such as RDB.
20. Discuss the factors that RDB will need to consider before changing from flow production to batch production.
21. To what extent will Anna's decision to invest in 'green projects' enable RDB to position itself as a sustainable 'green' company and to create a competitive advantage?
OR
Explain how a 'green' approach to manufacturing may provide a company like RDB with competitive advantage.
22. Comment on how RDB may adapt its organization from a modernist structure to a more flexible structure.
OR
23. Explain the benefits to RDB of having flexible structures as opposed to traditional structures.
OR
24. Evaluate Anna's proposal to change RDB from a traditional organizational structure to a flexible structure.

25. Explain two advantages for RDB of having a shorter working capital cycle.
26. Analyze changes in RDB's organizational structure (Line 80) and its effect on production.
27. Describe one advantage and one disadvantage of using job production as a method of producing ball bearing systems for mines (Line 65).
28. Describe one advantage and one disadvantage of using batch production as a method of producing non-standard sized ball bearings (Line 65).
29. Evaluate potential sources of finance for a multinational company like RDB to fund its spending on Research and Development.
30. As part of her new vision for RDB (Line 95), evaluate the conditions that Anna could create and incentives that she could introduce, to reduce employees' resistance to change.
31. Using a PEST framework, analyze the potential advantages and disadvantages of offshoring RDB's production to Brazil, China and India.
32. Discuss the impact of moving jobs overseas on any three stakeholder groups for RDB.
33. Discuss how Anna can manage moving factories overseas and reduce potential stakeholder conflict.
34. Using appropriate management theory (such as Handy's Shamrock organization), analyze the benefits of a change in RDB's workforce planning.
35. Examine why Anna felt it necessary to change RDB's promotion mix.
OR
36. Using at least one above-the-line technique and one below-the-line technique, prepare an appropriate promotional mix for RDB.
37. Suggest any three types of ICT tools that Anna can use to communicate to RDB's external stakeholders.
OR
38. Comment on the effectiveness of using ICT tools to communicate with RDB's external stakeholders.
39. Suggest how RDB might make use of the Internet when collecting market research information.

40. Suggest any two methods that RDB's marketing department may use to collect primary data.
 41. A government budget is approaching. Suggest changes in government policy for which staff at RDB are likely to be lobbying (Line 117).
 42. Evaluate the two restructuring options considered by Anna and recommend which of them is most suitable for RDB.
 43. Suggest one other possible method of restructuring available to RDB and explain it.
 44. Evaluate whether RDB should become a public limited company.
 45. Explain one advantage and one disadvantage to RDB of forming public-private partnerships with local governments.
 46. Discuss the importance and role of branding for RDB when changing their name from "Royal Danish Bearings" to "Green Bearings, an RDB Company".
- OR
47. Explain how RDB may use its new "Green Bearings" brand name to create competitive advantage.
 48. Evaluate the human resource implications for RDB if it introduces cell production.
 49. Analyze two benefits and two drawbacks for RDB of forming strategic alliances with ball bearing companies in Brazil, China and India.
 50. Using Lewin's Force Field Analysis, discuss the differences between Vlademar's and Anna's views about the growth of RDB.